



City Council Budget Workshop Minutes

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Tacoma Municipal Building North, Room 16, 733 Market Street, Tacoma, Washington 98402

May 19, 2004

Mayor Baarsma called the Budget Workshop to order at 4:38 p.m.

Council Members Present: 7 ~ Anderson, Ladenburg, Lonergan, Manthou, Phelps, Talbert, and Mayor Baarsma.

Council Members Absent: 2 ~ Evans and Stenger. (Council Member Stenger arrived at 4:44 p.m.)

Mayor Baarsma announced that the objective of this Budget Workshop included a continuation of the discussion of the Tacoma Dome excess levy and the feasibility of a levy lid lift, with the goal of reaching consensus as to how to direct staff to move forward with these two issues.

City Manager Jim Walton stated that staff had structured the agenda to assist the Council by using facilitators to guide the process and allowing staff to provide information.

(Council Member Stenger arrived here.)

Mr. Walton then provided an overview of the tentative budget process timeline followed by various staff members answering questions related to scheduling and statutory considerations.

Ms. Elizabeth Pauli, Acting City Attorney, reminded Council of certain conditions of the Open Public Meetings Act that would apply to the upcoming discussion, as well as future budget discussions.

City Manager Jim Walton then introduced Ms. Barbara McMahon and Ms. Gloria Elliott, partners in McMahon-Elliott Consulting.

Ms. McMahon provided a brief professional history and then outlined the process she proposed to use to facilitate dialogue and assist Council in achieving closure to major subject areas.

Ms. Diane Supler, Director of the Office of Management and Budget Analysis, reviewed the details of the Tacoma Dome Excess Levy, including levy rules and requirements, and the timing and the validation requirements related to presenting the levy for voter approval.

Mr. Mike Combs, Director of the Tacoma Dome, presented an overview of proposed Dome improvements and the associated costs.

General discussion followed regarding public outreach and feedback, debt capacity, parking issues related to the LeMay Museum, the potential return on investment to be generated from upgrading the Tacoma Dome, the advantages and disadvantages of an excess levy, and a tentative timeframe for submitting the levy for voter approval.

Mayor Baarsma called for a short dinner break to last approximately 20 minutes. At the expiration of the break, he reconvened the Budget Workshop and asked Ms. Supler to continue with an overview of the key components associated with a levy lid lift.

Ms. Supler described the statutory constraints under current Washington state legislation, the potential revenue to be gained under various methodologies, and current legal opinions related to statewide initiative issues.

General discussion ensued regarding ballot timing considerations, amount of income from new construction activity, the interrelationships between current bonds and levy issues and a rate increase, the types of projects and services to be funded from the proceeds generated, which strategies would be more successful in getting voter approval, and the next steps in this process.

City Manager Jim Walton proposed rescheduling the next Budget Workshop set for June 16 to June 30, 2004, to allow staff additional time to gather and process the financial data from the first quarter of 2004. No dissent was voiced by Council Members.

There being no further business, the Budget Workshop was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.


WILLIAM H. BAARSMA, MAYOR

ATTEST: 
DORIS SORUM, CITY CLERK